

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB PRIORITY

AMCONSUL TRIESTE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 068206

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT, YO

SUBJECT: ITALO-YUGOSLAV FLAREUP OVER TRIESTE

REF: STATE 067512

1. ADDITIONAL POINT OF POSSIBLE RELEVANCE TO ASSESSMENT
IN REFTTEL EMERGED IN DISCUSSION EVENING APRIL 3 WITH
YUGOSLAV DCM PETKOVIC. PETKOVIC INSISTED THAT SIGNS WHICH
WERE PUT UP EARLIER THIS YEAR ON ZONE B BORDER WITH ITALY
AND ON OTHER YUGOSLAV BORDERS WERE EXCLUSIVELY REPUBLIC
LEVEL SIGNS JUSTIFIED BY THE NEW CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF
THE REPUBLICS. IN THE ZONE B CASE IT WAS A "REPUBLIC OF
SLOVENIA" SIGN. THESE SIGNS SUPPLEMENTED "SOCIALIST
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA" SIGNS WHICH WERE ALREADY
IN PLACE. ASKED IF SFRY SIGNS HAD BEEN 'ALREADY IN PLACE"
AT ZONE B BORDER, PETKOVIC INSISTED THAT THEY WERE. POSTS
COMMENTS ON THIS CLAIM WOULD BE USEFUL AND RELEVANT TO
COMMENTS ON REFERENCE ASSESSMENT.

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2. FIRST SECRETARY VIDOVIC HAS TAKEN LINE THAT GOI MUST HAVE BEEN PLANNING TO REVIVE TRIESTE ISSUE, KNEW NATO EXERCISES AND SIXTH FLEET VISIT UPCOMING, AND USED REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA SIGNS AS PRETEXT. IF, HOWEVER, NO SIGNS HAD EXISTED ON ZONE B BORDER BEFORE LATE JANUARY, YUGOSLAV ACTIONS IN ERECTING THEM MUST BE SEEN AS DETERMINING TIMING OF PRESENT TENSION, ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY

LEVEL TO WHICH IT HAS ESCALATED.

3. AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR HERE HAS OFFERED HYPOTHESIS THAT POSTING OF REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA SIGNS WAS PRESSED BY SLOVENIAN LEADERSHIP ELEMENTS IN ORDER TO ENGAGE SFRY AUTHORITIES IN MOVE VIGOROUS EFFORT TO MAKE BORDERS PERMANENT.

4. POST COMMENTS ON THESE POINTS AND ON REFTEL REQUESTED ASAP. RUSH

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